

Thomas Jefferson to Joseph Fenwick, August 30, 1791, from the Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO THE U. S. CONSUL AT BORDEAUX J. MSS. (JOSEPH FENWICK)

Philadelphia Aug. 30. 1791.

Sir, —The object of the present is principally to acknowledge the receipt of your favors of Feb. 10. Mar. 22. 29. & Apr. 26. and the cases of wine forwarded for the President & myself, for your care of which be pleased to accept my thanks. I hope you have drawn on Mr. Short for the balance of 14#. 9s due to you.

The difference of 6# 5s duty on tobo. carried in French and American bottoms makes an extreme impression here. Notwithstanding the dispositions expressed by the National Assembly to treat on a friendly footing, I fear a retaliation will be thought indispensable, which if equivalent to their duty on our vessels will have the appearance of hostility. An *additional tonnage* of 12#. 10s the ton burthen on all *French ships* entering the ports of the U. S. would be but equivalent to an *additional duty* of 6#, 5s the hogshead on all tobo. carried in *American ships* into the ports of France. I take for granted the National Assembly were surprised into the measure by persons whose avarice blinded them to the consequences, & hope it will be repealed before our legislature shall be obliged to act on it. Such an attack on our carriage of our own productions, & such a retaliation would illy prepare the minds of the two nations for a liberal treaty as wished for by the real friends of both.

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I trouble you again in the affairs of my neighbor M. de Rieux, whose letters I leave open for your perusal, as they

will explain their object, together with the one addressed to yourself. I must ask the favor of you to advise Mr Plumand de Rieux of Nantes as to the best mode of remitting the money hither, as that will be much better known to you on the spot, than to me at this distance.